To: Point Foundation Board and Staff

Date: 3 September 1994

Re: Point Staff note of 2 September 1994

I want to commend the staff for constructively and forcefully speaking
their minds. I share their frustration and admire their ability to=
work
through the frustration and make positive recommendations toward=
moving
beyond this current crisis.=20

Before responding to their specific points, I want to vent about=
the
shambles in which we, the board, have left Point. There is no one=
in
charge. There is no direction. The only relatively clear statements=
we have
made are that the staff is laid off and we want to see WER #84 get=
out. We
have said nothing about answering the telephones, opening the mail,=
making
bank deposits, answering queries from loyal subscribers, marketing=
MWEC or
any of the other myriad details of operating a business. We have=
not given
the staff even a hint of how to characterize this "month" of unemployment.
Again, as I did at last Wednesday's board meeting, I say we must=
designate
an individual as on-site manager and we must tell him or her exactly=
what
is expected. We must set priorities:

=80to open the mail and handle the incoming subscriptions in such=
a way that
neither money nor subscribers are lost

=80to continue planing MWEC's promotion and responding to media=
inquiries
about the catalog

=80to pursue to the extent there is a reasonable hope of return=
those
outstanding distributor accounts that still owe us money

=80to finish WER #84 and see it into print in a way that delivers=
planned
results at minimum practical expense planned
results at minimum practical expense
=80to develop executable plans for new and immediate sources of=
income.=20

We, the board, in close cooperation with the staff, must set a budget,
either individually or collectively, for these items and insist that=
that
budget be followed. What we are now doing is a tragic joke. To simply
declare that there will be no spending, as we have, then spend on=
an ad hoc
basis in response to squeaky wheels is not sound fiscal management.

And now for the specific staff recommendations.

1. I have repeatedly asked the board to consider David Katz as a=
board
member and been told, "not now." David has vast experience and contacts=
in
every aspect of Point's business, including fund raising. He is a=
hard
charger. That is why David has been able to co-found Faralones Institute
and build it into a model of whole systems agriculture and living;=
to be one of the pioneers in modern organic farming; and to grow Ag Access,=
his
company, into the largest independent agricultural information resource=
in
the world. Apparently that style has made people nervous. I don't
understand. Knowing full well the challenges faced by Point, David=
Katz is
willing to contribute his considerable experience and insight to=
helping
Point survive. David's reputation is quite public and impeccable.=
Two
members of our board have done business with him in the past. Style
questions aside, the Point board could use David Katz - NOW.

2.In principle, I agree there needs to be more cooperation between=

the
board and the staff and that there should be a staff
representative=
on the
board. The board, however, whatever its makeup, must be ultimately
responsible for Point's operation and act accordingly.

In a related matter of board membership, several days ago I
stumbled=over
indications that John had appointed Ruth as Marley's replacement=
as
secretary for the Point Board. If true, as secretary she would
not=
have a
vote but is the only remaining legally appointed officer of the
corporation
(Barbara Blosser was treasurer and John Sumser was President) and=
should
attend all board meetings. Continuing to operate without a
President=
and
treasurer is a violation of corporation law.

3. I wholeheartedly agree. The staff is being asked to make deep=
personal
sacrifices. They should see the reasons and have the opportunity=
to
visualize the cash situation as yet another challenge to be met=
and
overcome. As mentioned above, we, the board, must also set a
budget=
and
priorities for what is to be accomplished during September and
afterward. 4.=20
A. Ruth Kissane is already doing the job better than the
last two=
editors.
She has a large circle of contacts which could enrich the
pages=
of WER and
a gentle focus on both goal and deadline that is quite
remarkable=
to watch
in action. She also has a vision for WER that could give the
magazine=
a
market it has never had, women, without offending the
existing readers.
(For perspective: women are the major subscribers to Old House
Journal,
the hammer and nail bible of grubbing old houses back to
habitability.)=
I
say good on her. Give her a go.

WER #84 needs a budget and a plan. What do we want and how much=
are we
willing to spend to get it?

B. It is hard for me to imagine that this is a question. Building=
the buzz
around MWEC is key to nearly every recovery strategy I can imagine.=
But it will not happen unless we do it and we can't pull anything off without=
a
plan that allows us to sort through the ideas and execute those=
that are
truly possible.

C. New projects. In the last year Whole Earth initiated Whole Earth=
Radio
with Scoop Nisker, talked (I believe) with John Brockman about a=
Whole
Earth Books series, pursued rights questions and potential markets=
for
electronic release of MWEC and WER/CQ archives. None of the documentation
for these potential sources of income/expense have been seen by=
the board.
We can not plan for the future without knowing the legal constraints,
financial risks/benefits and current status of these and any other
projects/commitments that may lie buried in the files. The board=
must see
all contracts, business plans, legal documents and anything else=
that can
be found which affect its ability to operate the Point Foundation.

- Mike Stone, ~~Business~~ Eric Mgr. - interim
authority

Michael Nassik

John Perry Barlow — Ty Cashman

Taro — Jivan Tabibian

this wkend house — Mayumi Oda

Taro — J. Baldwin

Taro — ~~Stewart Brand + Patty~~

Taro — ~~Howard Rheingold~~

~~Jeremy Sherman~~

~~Mark Dowie~~

Rick Fields
- Yoga Journal
- Tricycle

Chris Desser

Ann Herbert

Yes

Chris D -

Mayumi -

PL -

TM -

BT + daughter

JG -

~~Brady~~

Ty -

Jivan ?

~~J. Baldwin?~~

~~Ann Herbert?~~

Rick Fields

Chris Desser

Jivan Tabibian

Mayumi Oda

Ty Cashman

Rick Fields

John Perry Barlow

Jon McIntyre

J. Baldwin

Sunday
2-5

Parking

fruit
Cristoffs
Biscotti

all:
staff
former staff
other friends
private advice
social event
develop numbers

Eric
David